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# LAND USE ELEMENT CIRCULATION ELEMENT

San Luis Obispo County General Plan

## HUASNA/LOPEZ PLANNING AREA





THE LAND USE ELEMENT  
OF THE SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

HUASNA - LOPEZ AREA PLAN

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Adopted by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors  
December 1, 1987 - Resolution 87-527





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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This report describes county land use policies for the Huasna-Lopez planning area, including regulations which are also adopted as part of the Land Use Ordinance. This area plan allocates land use throughout the planning area by land use categories. The land use categories determine the types of land use that may be established on a parcel of land and define their allowable density and intensity. A list of land uses allowed in each land use category is in Chapter 7 (Table 0) of Framework for Planning.

Specific development "standards" are included in Chapter 8 to address special problems and conditions in individual communities. Standards for public services, circulation, and land use provide criteria for detailed evaluation of development projects. The text of this report, other than Chapter 8, is for general planning guidance only and is not to be used as a basis for approval or disapproval of development or land division proposals. Careful reading of the planning area standards will assist creating projects that are consistent with adopted policies and regulations.

Proposed "programs" are also noted at the end of the chapters on public services (Chapter 3), circulation (Chapter 4), land use (Chapter 6), and combining designations (Chapter 7). Programs are non-mandatory actions recommended to be initiated by the community, the county or other specified public agency, to address local problems or conditions. They are also intended to support community objectives in implementing the general plan. Because many recommended programs involve public expenditures, their initiation will be dependent upon the availability of funding.

In addition to the land use categories, programs and standards, combining designations are applied to specific areas to identify potential natural hazards and locations of notable resources. Combining designations are shown on the maps following Chapter 8.

The Huasna/Lopez planning area is bounded by Los Padres National Forest on the north and east, Santa Barbara County on the south, and the range of hills (Newsom and Temattate Ridges) which separates Huasna Valley from Nipomo Valley on the west. It is located in relation to other planning areas as shown in Figure 1. This area includes the upper Arroyo Grande Valley and Huasna Valley drainage areas. Major land uses are agriculture and the Lopez Lake Recreation Area. The planning area occupies 103,673 acres or 162 square miles.

A map of the Rio Grande area, showing various regions and landmarks. The map is divided into several sections by dashed lines, representing different administrative or geographical boundaries. Key locations labeled include:

- NORTH COAST
- NACIMIENTO
- ADELAIDA
- SALINAS RIVER
- EL POMAR / ESTRELLA
- SHANDON
- ESTERO
- LAS PILITAS
- SAN LUIS OBISPO
- SAN LUIS RAY
- LOS PADRES
- CARRIZO
- SOUTH COUNTY
- HUASNA

The map also shows a network of roads and a river system, likely the Rio Grande, which flows through the region. A shaded area is visible in the lower right quadrant, possibly indicating a specific zone of interest or a different type of land use.



## CHAPTER 2: POPULATION AND ECONOMY

Population growth within the Huasna-Lopez planning area has been steadily increasing, but slower than the county as a whole. This growth pattern reflects the agricultural orientation of the area. Future residential development will likely continue to complement agricultural use.

The growth rate of the Huasna-Lopez planning area is expected to remain low in comparison with the rest of the county, and is expected to decline very slightly as the countywide growth rate also declines. The 1987 population is estimated at 775 persons and this is expected to increase to approximately 1,000 by the year 2000.

Table A contains population projections for the planning area, excerpted from countywide projections found in Framework for Planning. For comparison, Table B contains the projected buildout capacity. Buildout capacity is the maximum population that can be anticipated within the land use categories of the 1987 plan. (Framework for Planning offers a more detailed discussion of buildout capacity.) According to the population projections, the buildout population would occur far beyond the year 2000.

TABLE A  
POPULATION PROJECTION  
HUASNA - LOPEZ PLANNING AREA

| Year | Planning Area<br>Population | % Of County |
|------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 1980 | 580                         | .37         |
| 1985 | 750                         | .39         |
| 1990 | 870                         | .38         |
| 1995 | 960                         | .36         |
| 2000 | 1000                        | .33         |



TABLE B  
BUILDOUT CAPACITY  
HUASNA - LOPEZ PLANNING AREA

| Land Use Category          | Acreage | Dwelling<br>Units | Population* |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------|-------------|
| Agriculture                | 82,840  | 388               | 1,191       |
| Rural Lands                | 17,069  | 106               | 325         |
| TOTAL                      | 99,909  | 494               | 1,516       |
| Buildout Population        |         |                   | 1,516       |
| Existing Population (1987) |         |                   | 775         |
| Potential Added Population |         |                   | 741         |

\* Potential population at buildout assumes 3.07 persons per household.

### ECONOMY

The planning area contains several features that strengthen the regional economy. Lopez Lake is the domestic water supply reservoir for coastal communities in the San Luis Bay planning area. It is also a major recreational resource adding to the quality of life in the south county, as well as contributing to tourist business in Arroyo Grande and nearby communities. Other recreation attractions are the Santa Lucia Wilderness Area, Los Padres National Forest and Biddle Park.

Twitchell Dam is a flood control and water conservation facility benefiting farmlands and communities in the Santa Maria Valley. The planning area also contains several extractive sites for sand, gravel, and rock. Oil exploration has been conducted around Huasna Valley.

The planning area is anticipated to remain a viable agricultural area with a stable economy. Because of limited population growth, residents will continue to rely on the Five Cities and other urban areas for needed goods and services.

Agriculture is the principal land use in the area, ranging from small irrigated farms to large cattle ranches. Valley lowlands, particularly in the Huasna drainage area, have soils and climate conducive to more intensive farm uses. Hilly areas with moderate slopes have the potential for tree and vine crops. A substantial portion of the planning area consists of hilly and mountainous land with chaparral and oak woodlands, suitable only for limited grazing. However, continued livestock production is supported by the large size of ranches encompassing mixed quality land. About half the planning area is committed to agriculture for a number of years through the agricultural preserve program.

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### CHAPTER 3: PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Appropriate levels of service for rural areas are discussed in Chapter 5 of Framework for Planning. The following discussion covers service concerns that directly affect the Huasna-Lopez planning area.

#### A. SPECIAL DISTRICTS

San Luis Coastal Resource Conservation District was established to introduce modern agricultural methods to farmers and ranchers, establish and maintain watersheds, stabilize sand dune areas, reduce pollution through planning and educational programs relative to proper use of natural resources, and assist in soil testing and drilling for individual landowners.

The Arroyo Grande Public Cemetery District provides cemetery functions and appurtenant services.

#### B. UTILITY SERVICES

##### Water Supply

The Huasna-Lopez planning area encompasses a large extent of watershed land that supplies both the Arroyo Grande (Lopez Lake) and Santa Maria (Twitchell Reservoir) groundwater basins. These basins are replenished primarily from uncontrolled runoff in several major and minor streams and from direct infiltration of rainfall.

In rural planning areas, such as Huasna-Lopez, water extractions will be a function of economic pumping and annual recharge by rainfall, streamflow and return irrigation. Individual wells should suffice for agricultural and limited residential uses.

Lopez Dam and reservoir, completed in 1970, regulates and supplies water on a contract basis for the cities of Arroyo Grande, Grover City, and Pismo Beach, the Oceano Community Services District and County Service Area No. 12 (which includes the Avila Beach area), and Port San Luis.

Lopez Lake was built with a storage capacity of 51,800 acre-feet. The estimated safe yield is 4,530 acre-feet for the five urban contractors plus an additional 4,200 acre-feet to satisfy vested water rights and augment the groundwater recharge of the Arroyo Grande/Tri-Cities/Mesa area. The total storage capacity of Twitchell Reservoir is 239,000 acre-feet. Twitchell Reservoir is operated to recharge the Santa Maria groundwater basin.

### Sewage Disposal

Lopez Lake Recreation Area is served by a small sewage treatment plant with wastewater disposal by percolation and evaporation ponds. Uses located within the Lopez Lake Recreation Area and Lopez terminal reservoir watersheds are only permitted to have septic disposals if there will be no hazard to the lake's water quality. Sewage disposal throughout the remainder of the planning area is by septic systems. Soil conditions and large parcel sizes should permit the continued safe usage of these techniques. Intensive recreational uses, however, may be limited by septic disposal methods.

### Solid Waste Disposal

Refuse disposal practices in rural areas include disposal of waste on individual properties and direct hauling by residents to disposal sites. The county Solid Waste Management Plan (1986) recommends rural container stations on the basis of user fees as an additional solution to disposal practices in rural areas. Public areas are provided with refuse containers and are picked up regularly. Rural container stations would offer a viable alternative to garbage service and help reduce indiscriminate dumping that now occurs. Development of appropriate sites and establishment of such a program should be coordinated with the county Health Department.

### Drainage

The principal streams of the Huasna-Lopez planning area are Cuyama River, Huasna River, Huasna Creek, Alamo Creek, and Arroyo Grande Creek. Watershed protection is particularly important in the planning area to prevent erosion and excessive sedimentation of Lopez Lake and Twitchell Reservoir. The Land Use Ordinance includes standards for grading and building permits to minimize the potential of erosion from new development. Other protective measures should include cooperative educational programs (as through the resource conservation district) to promote wise farming, grazing, and mineral extraction practices. Uncontrolled fires and other destruction of natural vegetation aggravate the problems of watershed erosion and reservoir sedimentation.

## C. EMERGENCY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

### Police Service

The entire planning area is served by the county sheriff. Response times are generally poor because the area is large and remote. A sheriff's substation is presently located in Oceano. The construction of an additional substation to serve the South County and Huasna-Lopez areas is a recognized need.



### Fire Protection

Fire protection for the Huasna-Lopez planning area is provided by the California Department of Forestry (CDF)/County Fire Department. Stations are located in San Luis Obispo and Nipomo, and an air tanker squadron is based at the Paso Robles airport during high risk fire season. Response times from these CDF stations are generally poor, with most areas being served in more than 30 minutes, although some limited areas can be served within 15 to 30 minutes. Assistance can be requested from the U.S. Forest Service, which operates a helicopter just east of Lopez Lake on the Hi Mountain Road during high fire risk season. Additional cooperative assistance is provided to the Arroyo Grande Valley area by the City of Arroyo Grande Fire Department. Prescribed burnings are conducted cooperatively by the CDF and private landowners to reduce wildland fire hazards. Structural fire protection and medical aid assistance is provided year-round by the San Luis Obispo County Fire Department. A fire pick-up pumper is maintained in the Lopez Lake Recreation Area for immediate response to fires in the park area. The Huasna-Lopez Planning Area is identified by the California Department of Forestry (CDF) as a "high" or "very high" fire hazard severity area.

### Emergency Medical Services

Ambulance service is provided by private ambulance service presently located in Arroyo Grande. Response times are generally poor for the more remote areas. The California Department of Forestry (CDF)/County Fire Department also assists in responding to medical emergencies.

### Human Services

All offices providing human services (i.e., counseling, mental health, welfare) to residents of the planning area are located in the communities in the San Luis Bay and South County planning areas.

### Schools

The entire planning area is within the Lucia Mar Unified School District. Bus service is provided to the entrance of the Lopez Lake Recreational Area and also to Huasna townsite. Students attend either Arroyo Grande High School, Paulding Intermediate School, or Ocean View or Branch Elementary School. No schools are anticipated within the planning area.

### Library

Library service is provided to the planning area primarily through the South County Center in Arroyo Grande.

## D. RECREATION SERVICES

The Huasna-Lopez planning area includes or provides ready access to a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities. The principal developed area is the Lopez Lake Recreation Area which provides for boating,

swimming, camping, picnicking, and hiking. The Lopez 2000 Plan was adopted by the county in 1984 as the long-range master plan for the Lopez Lake Recreation Area.

Within Los Padres National Forest, the Santa Lucia Wilderness Area north of Lopez Lake has scenic hiking trails, while the rest of the forest provides limited access for camping, hiking, and hunting.

Biddle Park is a county park developed along Arroyo Grande Creek downstream from Lopez Lake and is primarily used as a regional park for South County residents who prefer a quiet, relaxed setting for family and group outings, picnicking, and field sports.

Those who choose to live in the more remote portions of the planning area exchange the more easily-accessible variety of recreation and cultural facilities available to the urban resident for the rural lifestyle and outdoor forms of recreation.

#### Trail Access Connections

Several private properties lie between Lopez Lake and the National Forest, interrupting access and the continuity of recreational use between the two blocks of public land. The Lopez 2000 Plan includes policies recommending that access be established between the northwest boundary of Lopez Lake Recreation Area and the National Forest. The plan recommends developing a connection to Bald Mountain.

#### Equestrian Trails

There is interest among citizens in the area in the development of a system of equestrian trails. This will be considered during preparation of the county Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

### E. PLANNING AREA SERVICE PROGRAMS

"Programs" are non-mandatory actions or policies recommended by the Land Use Element to achieve community or areawide objectives identified in this area plan. The implementation of each LUE program is the responsibility of the community, through the county or other public agency identified in the program itself. Because programs (some of which include special studies) are recommended actions rather than mandatory requirements, implementation of any program should be based on consideration of community needs and substantial community support for the program and its related cost.

The following public service programs are grouped under general headings to indicate the type of service concern they each address.

#### Solid Waste Disposal

1. Collection Stations. A rural container collection station should be established in Huasna Valley near the old Huasna townsite.

Recreation Services

2. Trail Access Connections. The Planning and General Services Departments should investigate easements or land exchanges to develop a connection between the northwestern area at Lopez Lake Recreation Area and the Bald Mountain Trail in Los Padres National Forest.
3. Equestrian Trails. The General Services Department should respond to organized citizen groups to map an equestrian trail system for the planning area, and to form a countywide trails council to advise and participate in the creation and management of walking and riding trails.





## CHAPTER 4: CIRCULATION

This chapter supercedes and replaces the portions of the Circulation Element of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan (1979) which cover the Huasna-Lopez Planning Area. This chapter together with the countywide goals and policies of the circulation element in Chapter 6 Framework for Planning, Part 1 of the Land Use Element, comprise the Circulation Element of the San Luis Obispo County General Plan for the Huasna-Lopez Planning Area.

The planning area circulation system will accommodate anticipated traffic along existing roads with only minor improvements required by future development. Roads are the principal planning area transportation mode, though airstrips could serve private use or emergencies.

### A. ROADS

The LUE maps show the functional classifications of major existing and proposed roads. Improvements will be required with proposed land divisions by the county Real Property Division Ordinance and planning area standards. The following major proposals for the road system are shown on the LUE maps; listed order does not imply any priority.

#### Arterials

State Highway 166 - This is the major route between the southern San Joaquin Valley, southern San Luis Obispo County and northern Santa Barbara County. The highway provides access to large ranches and local rural roads in the southern portions of the planning area. The existing level of service is "A". The "A" rating is projected to remain through the year 2005. Any local improvements would primarily be for safe ingress and egress to local roads and ranches.

Lopez Drive - This arterial road provides major access to Lopez Lake Recreation Area as well the Arroyo Grande Valley and other rural roads en route. The level of service is "A" except during peak recreational times when the level of service is "B". Access from abutting properties should be limited by combining driveways wherever possible because of recreation traffic on weekends and holidays.

#### Collector and Local Roads

Planning area collector and local roads access farms, ranches, small rural clusters and Los Padres National Forest, and should generally be maintained in their present state.

## B. OTHER TRANSPORTATION MODES

### Bikeways

Lopez Drive is designated as a Class II bikeway to Lopez Lake. A Class II bikeway is a right-of-way beside the vehicle lanes that is restricted only for bicycle travel.

### Equestrian Trails

The rural character of the Huasna-Lopez Planning Area makes it popular among riders. There is interest in establishing a system of equestrian trails, but mapping a trail system will require the active participation of interested citizens. Their work could be coordinated with the formation of a countywide trails council which will be considered during preparation of the County Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

## C. PLANNING AREA CIRCULATION PROGRAMS

"Programs" are non-mandatory actions or actions or policies recommended to achieve community or areawide objectives identified in this area plan. Implementation of each LUE program is the responsibility of the community, through the county or other agency identified in the program itself. Because programs (some of which are special studies) are recommended actions rather than mandatory requirements, their implementation should be based on consideration of community needs and substantial community support for the program and its related cost. The following programs are grouped under general headings to indicate where they each apply.

### Areawide

1. Bikeways. The Engineering Department should construct Class II bike lanes along Lopez Drive from Arroyo Grande to Lopez Lake at the time of any major reconstruction of Lopez Drive.
2. Road Maintenance. The Engineering Department should maintain the existing road system in its present status until the need for substantial improvements or new roads is clearly demonstrated.
3. Trails. The county should work with affected state and local agencies to explore the feasibility of an equestrian and hiking trail to link the Arroyo Grande fringe and Biddle Park.
4. Equestrian Trails. An equestrian trail system should be mapped for the planning area. This work should be coordinated between interested citizens and the General Services Department.



## CHAPTER 5: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The primary purpose of the Resource Management System (RMS) is to provide information to decision-makers about the capacities of growth supporting resources and projections on when they may become deficient. The use of these resources is monitored by the Planning Department, and information on their capacities is included in this chapter. The monitoring process supports an ongoing review of the need for capital programs, to provide information to the public, and to support decision-making about resources. The goal of RMS is to provide sufficient lead time to avoid or correct a resource problem without the necessity of resorting to development moratoria or other severe growth restrictions.

### A. FRAMEWORK FOR THE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The various alert levels are described briefly below. A more complete description is in Chapter 4 of Framework for Planning, in Part I of the Land Use Element.

#### LEVEL I: Resource Capacity Problem

A resource problem is identified when either the area plan resource inventory or data obtained from separate capacity studies and monitoring programs indicate the capacity of a resource will be reached within a time period critical to the particular resource. (Critical time periods for Level I problems for each resource are described in Framework for Planning, Table K, Chapter 4).

#### LEVEL II: Diminishing Resource Capacity

This threshold indicates a public works project is needed to correct a deficiency, and the time needed to complete the project is the same as the time when the resource is estimated to become deficient (e.g., remaining sewer plant capacity is enough to handle the current growth rate for five more years, which is also the time needed to complete a plant expansion project). The primary purpose of Level II is to identify the point at which a public works project must be initiated, and if necessary, to extend the time available to correct the resource deficiency.

#### LEVEL III: Resource Capacity Met or Exceeded

Level III occurs when the capacity of a resource has been met or will be exceeded before improvements can be constructed. This creates a deficiency of sufficient magnitude that drastic actions may be needed to protect public health and safety.

## B. RELATIONSHIP TO THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Resource Management System (RMS) provides early information to decision-makers about alternatives to avoid resource deficiencies. Where funding of capital projects is concerned, the RMS links the necessary project to a capital improvement program so that a timely decision can be made, leaving time for other alternatives if funding is not or cannot be approved. In most cases where a funding request is not approved, the RMS sends the Board of Supervisors an alert memo that describes the potential resource problem and identifies other actions that can be taken to avert the deficiency.

## C. PLANNING AREA RESOURCE CAPACITIES

This chapter assesses the major resources of water supply, sewage disposal, schools and road capacity. In conjunction with those assessments, population thresholds and/or dates are identified for three levels of severity for each resource where applicable. The population thresholds are estimates because changes in population growth, resource consumption or other factors may occur. Data developed for this area plan will be reviewed as part of the update program, and if new information makes a revision necessary.

The following sections provide information on the status of these resources. When levels of severity are reached, verification will occur after public hearings before the Board of Supervisors. The Board may take action at that time to alleviate the situation, if necessary.

Once level of severity thresholds have been identified, project evaluation may be done through the monitoring process, resource capacity studies, the LUE update process and alert memos to the Board of Supervisors. The population in the Huasna-Lopez Planning Area is widely dispersed. Thus, there is little impact on resources. Given the current population projections, no level of severity threshold levels are expected.

### Water Supply

The population of this planning area is widely distributed. Water is supplied to both agriculture and residences through individual wells. Due to the relatively small scattered population, water supply problems are not anticipated for the life of this plan. Thus, there is no level of severity for water resources in the Huasna-Lopez Planning Area.

However, the planning area encompasses a large extent of the watershed land that supplies water to the Arroyo Grande and Santa Maria groundwater basin. Thus, it will be important to make sure water quality is not deteriorating. Water quality is monitored by the Environmental Health Department.

### Sewage Disposal

The Lopez Lake Recreation area is served by a small treatment plant. Septic system use within the recreation area around Lopez Lake and the Lopez terminal reservoir watersheds is only permitted if there will be no hazard to the lake's water quality. The remainder of the planning area is served by individual septic systems. No level of severity is anticipated at this time.

### Roads/Circulation

The Engineering Department monitors traffic on Lopez Drive at Orcutt Road. Most of the traffic is due to the recreational use of Lopez Lake. During peak summer recreation activity in June, 1986, and June, 1987 there was a level of service "B" on Sunday afternoons. Although further recreational development may increase use of the lake, there appears to be ample capacity for additional traffic. There are no levels of severity anticipated for Lopez Drive.

On Highway 166, the Caltrans' System Management Plan and the Route Concept Report both project a level of service "A" through the year 2005. No level of severity is anticipated.

Although no severity levels have been identified for roads in the Huasna-Lopez Planning Area, monitoring programs should continue in order to ensure early detection of a problem.

### Schools

The Huasna-Lopez Planning Area is served by the Lucia Mar Unified School District; however, no schools are located in the planning area. The School District is experiencing problems with overcrowding and is at a level of Severity III. This problem affects children from the planning area but they are only a small number of the overall school population and the area does not significantly contribute to the overcrowded conditions.





## CHAPTER 6: LAND USE

This chapter covers land use issues in the Huasna - Lopez planning area. The LUE official maps separate the planning area into land use categories, which define regulations for land uses, density and intensity of use. Land use "programs" at the end of this chapter recommend actions by the county or other public agencies. Chapter 8 contains development standards related to the land use categories to assist in guiding planning area development. Standards define actions required for new development to achieve consistency with the general plan.

Table C summarizes acreage for each land use category.

TABLE C  
LAND USE ACREAGE  
HUASNA - LOPEZ PLANNING AREA

| <u>Land Use Categories</u>  | <u>Acreage</u> |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Open Space                  | -              |
| Agriculture                 | 82,840         |
| Rural Lands                 | 17,069         |
| Recreation                  | 3,764          |
| Residential Rural           | -              |
| Residential Suburban        | -              |
| Residential Single Family   | -              |
| Residential Multiple Family | -              |
| Office and Professional     | -              |
| Commercial Retail           | -              |
| Commercial Service          | -              |
| Industrial                  | -              |
| Public Facilities           | -              |
| TOTAL                       | 103,673        |

Rural categories of land use apply to the entire planning area. These are Agriculture, Rural Lands, and Recreation.

### A. LAND USE CATEGORIES

#### Agriculture

Agriculture remains the most widespread land use in the planning area. Many of the large old ranchos and land grants are owned and operated by descendents of the original families living in the same ranch buildings. A unique feature is the "old west" town recreated at the Tar Springs Ranch headquarters as a conference center. The large parcel sizes and ownership patterns, the large number of properties under agriculture preserve contracts, and the good soils and extensive grazing lands all reinforce this as an agricultural area.

Some rural residential uses are located in the planning area, particularly in the Huasna Valley; however, any further appreciable loss in farm or ranch acreages through rural homesite development should be avoided. Various proposals on both the Ranchita and Huasna Ranches have ranged from campsites to small ranchettes and clustered housing; however, any property divisions should be large enough to support agricultural operations qualifying for agricultural preserve.

Prime valley lands should be protected exclusively for agricultural uses. Substantial portions of the planning area are marginal agricultural lands because of steep topography and extensive oak and chaparral cover. However, most of this land is still in a few large ranch holdings where extensive acreages make up for the marginal quality of land to support viable rangeland use. Special uses such as dude ranches and camps may be appropriate; however, they must be compatible with the existing rural environment and be integrated with services, access and circulation patterns.

There are several rock quarries and extraction sites, particularly in the Suey Creek and Alamo Creek areas, providing an existing or potential source of sand, gravel, and rock for construction purposes.

#### Rural Lands

Rural Lands in the Huasna-Lopez planning area consist almost solely of agriculturally non-viable properties in rugged, chaparral-covered terrain. These lands include some larger properties with little or no agricultural value, as well as smaller parcels of marginal land that are surrounded by large ownerships in the Agriculture land use category. Many of the Rural Lands parcels are federal lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. Most of the Rural Lands are remote and appropriate only for low intensity uses and densities.

#### Recreation

Lopez Lake Recreation Area provides an outstanding recreation setting with a variety of water and associated outdoor activities. The lake attracts county residents as well as vacationers from other areas of the state. The Lopez 2000 plan was adopted in 1984 as a master plan for the long-range recreational development of the park. Biddle Park primarily serves as a regional park for residents of the adjacent San Luis Bay planning area.

These facilities will continue to meet various tourist and resident recreational requirements and should be developed, refined and expanded to include programs and facilities for any future recreational needs. Equestrian trails, bicycle and pedestrian paths are also envisioned as connecting these facilities with the San Luis Bay planning area.

### B. PLANNING AREA LAND USE PROGRAMS

"Programs" are non-mandatory actions or policies recommended by the Land



Use Element to achieve community or areawide objectives identified in this area plan. The implementation of each LUE program is the responsibility of the community, through the county or other public agency identified in the program itself. Because programs (some of which include special studies) are recommended actions rather than mandatory requirements, implementation of any program should be based on consideration of community needs and substantial community support for the program and its related cost. The following program is listed under a heading to indicate the area it addresses.

Areawide

1. Public Lands. The county should encourage retention of public land in public ownership except where trade of isolated parcels would be mutually beneficial for consolidating holdings.



## CHAPTER 7: COMBINING DESIGNATIONS

### A. COMBINING DESIGNATIONS

Combining designations are special overlay categories applied in areas of the county with hazardous conditions or special resources, where more detailed project review is needed to avoid adverse environmental impacts or effects of hazardous conditions on proposed projects. The following areas are subject to special combining designations. In some cases, specific standards have been adopted for an area where a combining designation is applied. These standards are found in Chapter 8 (Planning Area Standards) and are applicable to development proposals in addition to the standards of Chapter 22.07 of the Land Use Ordinance.

Portions of the Santa Lucia Range and Mountainous Areas (GSA) - These areas define portions of the planning area with moderately high and high landslide risk potential, as identified in the Seismic Safety Element.

Twitchell Reservoir, Huasna River, Huasna Creek, Alamo Creek, Arroyo Grande Creek and Tributaries, Cuyama River (FH) - Twitchell Reservoir is a large flood control and water conservation facility. Though normally dry, wetter winters have seen the reservoir inundate the lower five miles of Huasna Valley and the lower two miles of Alamo Creek, rendering areas below the 652-foot elevation unsuitable for permanent buildings. Upstream portions of these watercourses (and other creeks in the planning area) are potential flood hazard areas during intense or prolonged rainfall.

Huasna School (1907) (H-1) - This was a school for early ranchers in the Huasna Valley. The wood structure is typical of early county school architecture with clapboard siding and a belfry. See H-1 on the Combining Designations Map.

Rancho Huasna (Isaac Sparks Adobe - 1850) (H-2) - This early adobe home of a prominent rancher is also of Early California ranch architecture. See H-2 on the Combining Designations Map.

Porter Ranchhouse (1890) (H-3) - The Porter Ranchhouse was home to one of the early prominent families in the area and is representative of early California ranches. See H-3 on the Combining Designations Map.

Tar Springs Ranch (H-4) - This early ranch was part of the original Santa Manuela Mexican Land Grant. The ranch presently operates a conference center recreated as an "old west" town. See H-4 on the Combining Designations Map.



Santa Lucia Wilderness Area (SRA-1) - This rugged area extends into the northerly edge of the planning area and is extremely important for its wilderness wildlife value and is one of the most primitive in the county. Several rare and endemic plant species are present and the area is valuable as a wildlife habitat, watershed and scenic backdrop. See SRA-1 on the Combining Designations Map.

Fish Creek-Geode Mountain (SRA-2) - This area, located in the southeast corner of the planning area, supports oak woods and mixed evergreen forests and prominent geologic outcrops of high scenic value. See SRA-2 on the Combining Designations Map.

Lopez Lake (SRA-3) - This area includes private lands within the viewshed and immediate watershed of Lopez Lake Recreation Area and the highly visible hillsides along the Lopez Drive corridor near Lopez Dam. The SRA boundary largely follows the ridgelines of the areas visible from the recreation area. Development on the scenic hillsides around the lake could threaten the Park's visual scene, water quality, primitive values and wildlife habitat. The Lopez 2000 Master Plan includes policies recommending that scenic hillsides be protected from indiscriminate grading or insensitive development to preserve the lake both as a water supply and for recreational use. See SRA-3 on the Combining Designations Map.

#### B. PROPOSED PUBLIC FACILITIES

One of the principal functions of local government is to provide public services in the quality and quantity desired and needed by the population served. The Huasna-Lopez Planning Area, being primarily an agricultural area, has little need for additional services. The only proposed public facility is the establishment of a rural solid waste container station in Huasna Valley.

## CHAPTER 8: PLANNING AREA STANDARDS

This chapter contains special "standards" for the Huasna-Lopez planning area. Standards are mandatory requirements for development, designed to handle identified problems in a particular rural area, or to respond to concerns in an individual community. Planning area standards can range from special setbacks in one neighborhood, to limits on the kinds of land use normally allowed by the LUE (Table 0, Part I) because of certain community conditions.

These standards apply to the planning and development of new land uses, and must be satisfied for a new land use permit to be approved, and for a newly-constructed project to be used. All standards listed in this area plan may not affect the entire planning area. Most apply to specific communities or rural locations.

Huasna-Lopez planning area standards are organized under several headings describing locations in the planning area where they apply. Standards are grouped first by community, then by land use category, and finally under headings naming a specific area where the standard must be satisfied.

These requirements apply to proposed projects in addition to provisions of the Land Use Ordinance. Where these standards conflict with the LUO, these standards control. In any case where this area plan designates a property in the Open Space or Recreation land use categories, in the Sensitive Resource or Historic Area combining designations, or where the LUE identifies a need for open space preservation through easement, contract or other instrument, such designation does not in and of itself convey or imply any right of public use, access, trespass or violation of privacy.

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AREAWIDE: The following standards apply to lands in the Huasna-Lopez planning area which are not limited to a single land use category.

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1. Driveways - Land Divisions. New land divisions are to include, where possible, design provisions for combining driveways and private access roads from Lopez Drive where terrain and adequate sight distance permits.
2. Road Design and Construction. New road alignments proposed in land division applications are to be designed and constructed to minimize terrain disturbance consistent with safety and construction cost. Altered slopes are to be replanted with indigenous plants or protected by other appropriate erosion control measures.

3. Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Facilities. In addition to applicable standards in LUO Sections 22.08.170 to 22.08.198, the following standards shall apply to new oil and gas exploration and production facilities which propose truck traffic on Huasna Road and Huasna Townsite Road.
- A. All parking and loading activities related to well drilling or test production are to occur on-site.
  - B. Large trucks (three or more axles) serving the site with equipment deliveries and oil transport shall be limited to specific times as determined by permit approval.
  - C. Large trucks either traveling singly or in groups shall be preceded by a convoy vehicle equipped with warning devices. The convoy area shall be between U.S. Highway 101 and the site.

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RURAL LANDS: The following standards apply only to lands within the Rural Lands land use category.

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- 1. Limitation on Use. All allowable uses are permitted except correctional institutions, off-road vehicle courses and residential care facilities.
- 2. Parcel Size - -Alisos Road. For the rural lands property on Alisos Road, the minimum parcel size for calculating density of new land divisions is to be 80 acres unless a larger minimum size would otherwise be required by Section 22.04.025 of the Land Use Ordinance.

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COMBINING DESIGNATIONS: The following standards apply only to lands in the Sensitive Resource Area (SRA) Combining Designation, as listed below and shown on official maps.

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Lopez Lake (SRA) - The following standards apply to lands in the Agriculture and Rural Lands categories within the Lopez Lake SRA.

- 1. Limitation on Use. Uses identified in Table O, Part I of the Land Use Element as "A" or "S" uses are permitted except that mining and related operations are only allowed within the SRA to reclaim existing mines.



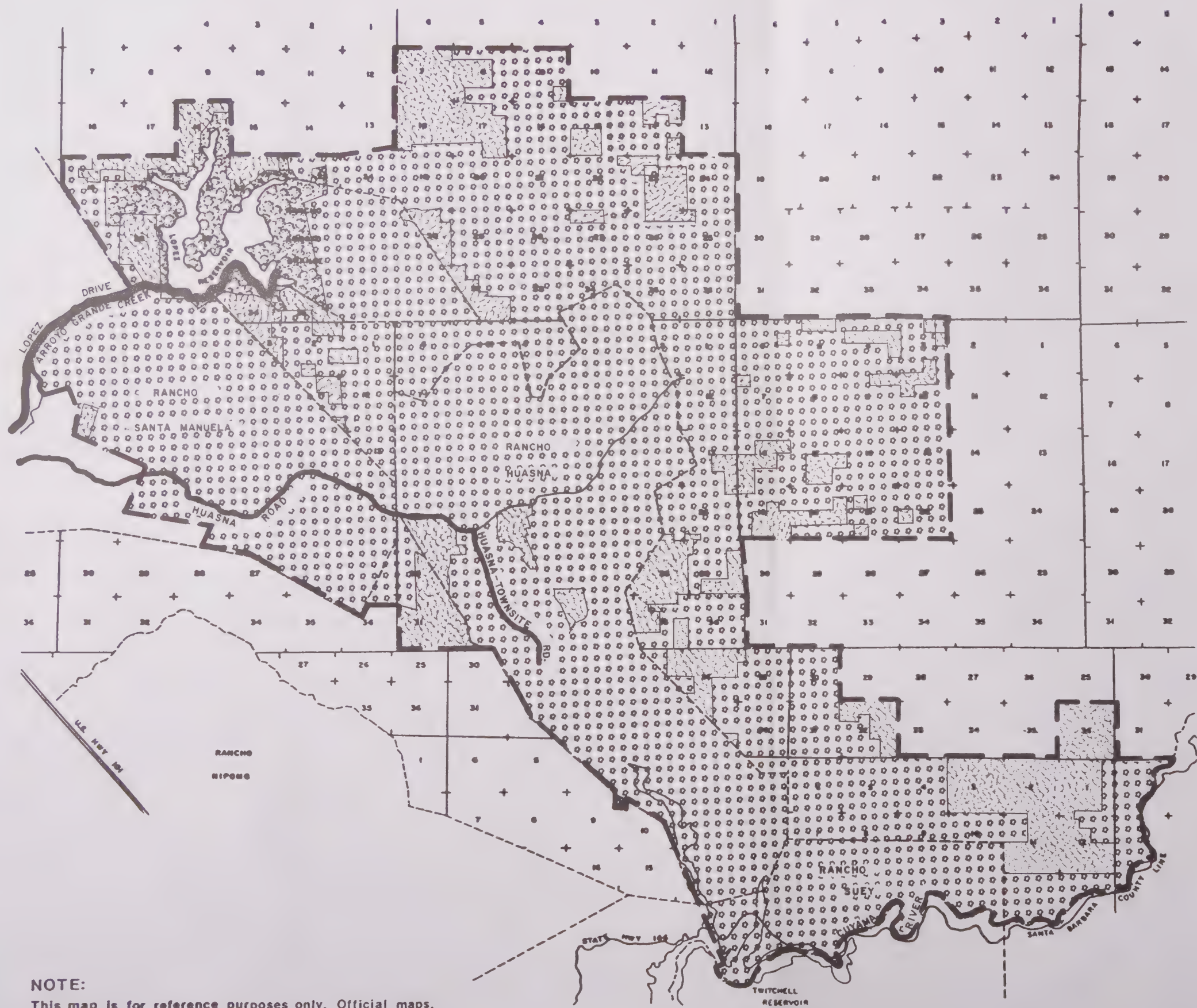
2. Surface Mining. Applications for surface mining outside the Lopez Lake SRA, where applicable, shall include plans to reclaim and revegetate any existing mines or related excavations that are located within the SRA on the same property.
3. Special Requirements for Residential Development.
  - A. Permit Requirement. Minor use permit approval is required for all new residential development involving structures and access road construction in the SRA applied to the Lopez Lake Area.
  - B. Application Content. All minor use permit and development plan applications shall include a grading plan, erosion control plan, landscaping plan and architectural elevations. Applications shall also include a visual analysis of the project to show how the location and design of the project will mitigate its visual impact on the Lopez Lake Recreation Area. A visual analysis shall include topographic maps with lines of sight, cross sections, photographs, or other supporting documentation to demonstrate that the project complies with the location and site development criteria of standards C through E below.
  - C. Building Site Limitation. Wherever feasible on properties proposed for development, all building sites and access roads shall be located outside the SRA area, so as not to be visible from the recreation area.
  - D. Location Criteria. If development cannot comply with standard 3c above, then the following location criteria shall be required:
    - (1) Structures shall be located away from exposed ridges or hilltops to areas of minimum visibility from the Recreation Area.
    - (2) Locate development to minimize grading for residences and access roads
    - (3) No development, including access roads, shall be permitted on slopes steeper than 30%.
    - (4) Locate access roads to have minimum feasible cross slopes and visibility.
    - (5) New access to development shall use existing roads wherever feasible.
  - E. Site Development Criteria:
    - (1) Utilize existing vegetation, topographic features and landscaping to screen the visibility of development.

- (2) Residences shall be limited to a single story where necessary to reduce visibility.
- (3) A maximum road cut of 5 feet shall be maintained wherever possible in visible areas.
- (4) Altered slopes shall be replanted with native plant species.

4. Special Requirements for Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Facilities.

- A. Permit Requirement. Development Plan approval is required for oil and gas exploration and production facilities. Each application shall comply with the following criteria before acceptance.
- B. Application Content. Provide a visual analysis in the form of topographic maps with lines of sight, cross sections, photographs and other supporting documentation that demonstrate that the project will mitigate the visual impact on Lopez Lake Recreation Area by compliance with the site location and development standards below.
- C. Location Criteria. Wherever possible, oil and gas exploration and production facilities shall locate outside the SRA boundary. Any application proposing facilities within the SRA area must demonstrate this need to do so through a combination of technical and economic analysis not including proprietary information to the industry. Exploration and production facilities shall not be allowed on unobstructed, visible hilltops or ridgelines. If a project cannot comply with this standard, the following site development criteria shall be required.
- D. Site Development Standards
  - (1) Proposed facilities shall be screened from view by existing topography, vegetation, earthen berms and/or solid fencing. Berms and fencing shall be buffered with specimen-sized evergreen vegetation.
  - (2) Project site design shall include the maximum consolidation of facilities and minimal feasible heights, possibly including recessed or sunken features below existing grade.
  - (3) Proposed access roads shall have the minimum feasible cross slopes and visibility, with a maximum road cut of five feet maintained wherever possible in visible areas. Prepare a grading, erosion control and landscaping plan, emphasizing vegetation to screen all visible cut and fill slopes.





**NOTE:**  
This map is for reference purposes only. Official maps, showing precise property lines and land use category boundaries, are on file in the Planning Department.

## LEGEND

### LAND USE CATEGORIES

- AGRICULTURE
- RURAL LANDS
- RECREATION
- RESIDENTIAL RURAL
- RESIDENTIAL SUBURBAN
- RESIDENTIAL SINGLE FAMILY
- RESIDENTIAL MULTIPLE FAMILY
- OFFICE & PROFESSIONAL
- COMMERCIAL RETAIL
- COMMERCIAL SERVICE
- INDUSTRIAL
- PUBLIC FACILITIES
- OPEN SPACE

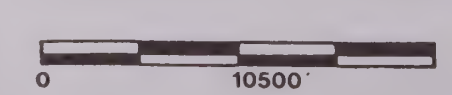
### BOUNDARIES

- URBAN RESERVE LINE (URL)
- URBAN SERVICES LINE (USL)
- VILLAGE RESERVE LINE (VRL)
- PLANNING AREA
- CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

### CIRCULATION

- | EXISTING | PROPOSED |                    |
|----------|----------|--------------------|
|          |          | PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL |
|          |          | ARTERIAL           |
|          |          | COLLECTOR          |
|          |          | INTERCHANGE        |

### SCALE



### NORTH



## HUASNA / LOPEZ

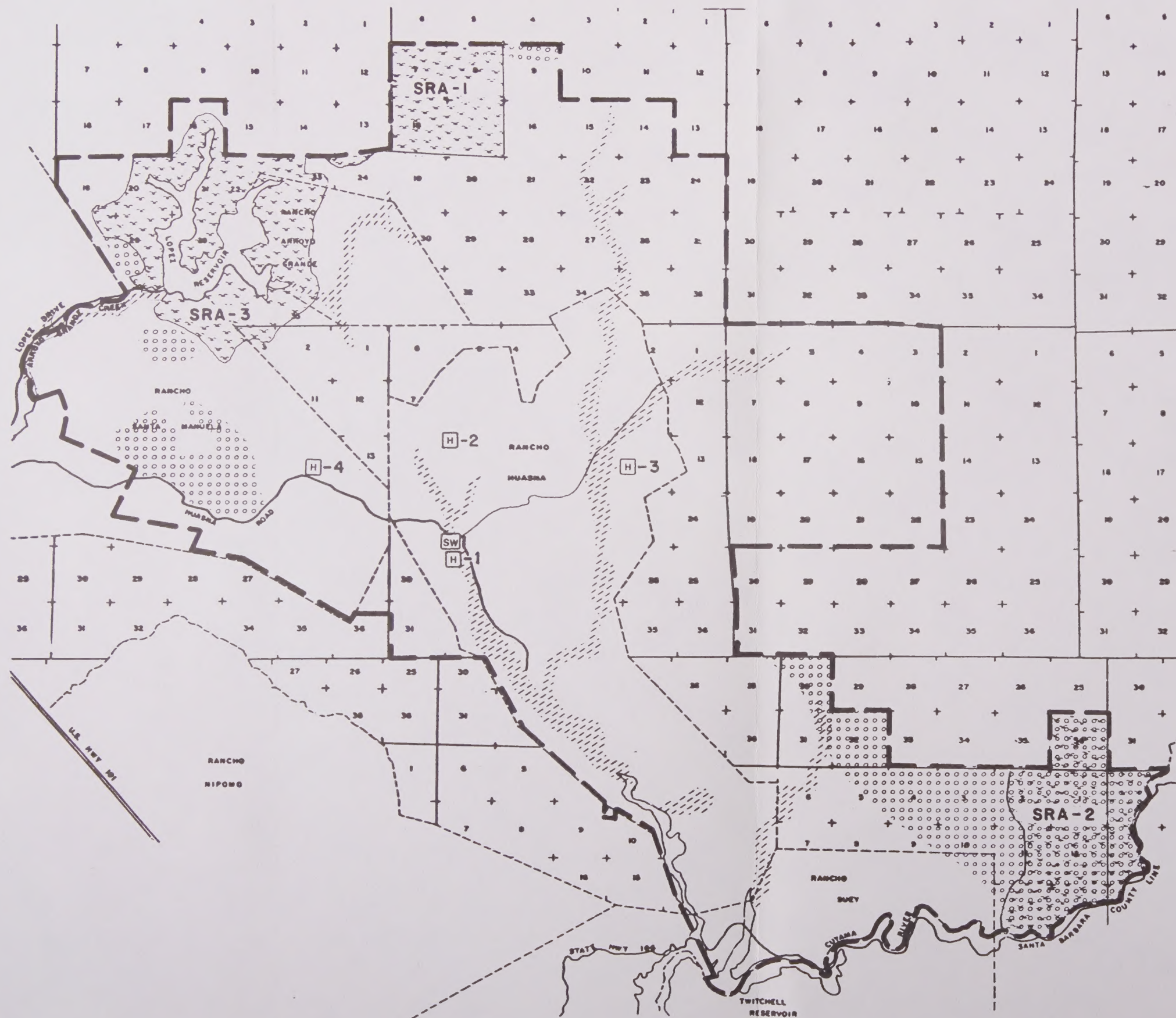
### LAND USE CATEGORIES & CIRCULATION

San Luis Obispo County Planning Department  
Revised:









## LEGEND

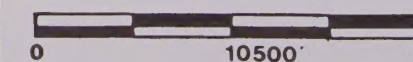
### COMBINING DESIGNATIONS

|  |          |                                  |
|--|----------|----------------------------------|
|  | AR       | AIRPORT REVIEW                   |
|  | ARCH-SEN | ARCHAEOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE AREAS |
|  | GS       | GEOLOGIC STUDY AREA              |
|  | FH       | FLOOD HAZARD                     |
|  | H        | HISTORIC                         |
|  | EX       | ENERGY & EXTRACTIVE AREA         |
|  | LCP      | LOCAL COASTAL PLAN               |
|  | V        | VISITOR SERVING AREA             |
|  | SRA      | SENSITIVE RESOURCE AREA          |

### PROPOSED PUBLIC FACILITIES

|  |     |  |
|--|-----|--|
|  | HS  | HIGH SCHOOL                              |
|  | JHS | JR. HIGH SCHOOL                          |
|  | E   | ELEMENTARY SCHOOL                        |
|  |     | PARK                                     |
|  |     | POLICE OR PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY STATION |
|  | WT  | WATER TREATMENT FACILITIES               |
|  | ST  | SEWAGE TREATMENT FACILITIES              |
|  | SW  | SOLID WASTE FACILITIES                   |
|  | GF  | GOVERNMENT FACILITY                      |
|  | L   | LIBRARY                                  |

SCALE



NORTH



## HUASNA / LOPEZ

### COMBINING DESIGNATIONS

San Luis Obispo County Planning Department  
Revised:

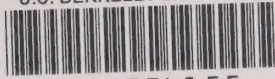
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